



MINUTES

Focus Group Landing Obligation

Virtual

Tuesday 28 March 2023
14:30 – 16:00 CET

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair Emiel Brouckaert welcomed all members to the meeting. He thanked Michael Keatinge for joining the meeting. Apologies were received from Alexandra Philippe and Aodh O'Donnell.

Action points from the last meeting (6 February 2023):

1	The Secretariat will recirculate the updated draft to the Focus Group for review by 13 February.
	Response to WW MAP consultation submitted on 28 February.
2	Secretariat to prepare draft advice on JR for review by the Focus Group and to be then submitted to Geographical Working Groups for discussion at meetings in Santiago.
	Draft JR advice sent to FG in advance of the meeting.
3	Put forward suggestion to HWG and ExCom to prepare a separate advice on spur dog referring to the fishery management in 2023.
	Letter on spurdog fishery management submitted to DG MARE on 8 March.

2. Draft advice Joint Recommendation Discard Plan

a. Update from MS TG meeting 16 March

Brouckaert explained that a detailed report on the meeting has been produced and distributed on the website. He mentioned that an STECF expert gave a presentation on the evaluation of the JR Discard Plan. In particular, he mentioned two checklists developed by STECF of what information is needed for de minimis and survivability exemptions respectively which Regional Groups can refer to in the submitted joint recommendations and that the STECF EWG groups can use as a checklist for the evaluation process. These had been included in the draft advice for discussion.

b. "What if" exercise with choke tool

Michael Keatinge gave an update on the work he had carried on the tool, in particular adding information on discards and exemptions.

The tool is about bringing to one place all the information needed. He pointed out that there were



several sources from where discard information was collected. Information on discard estimate has been updated using data from ICES advice (discard, rate per gear, TAC advised) and the tool also will pull out exemptions applying to a specific stock.

Sean O'Donoghue commented that the tool is very useful but that it needs to be used carefully to ensure its results are properly interpreted. O'Donoghue particularly referred to the statement in the draft advice that de minimis are needed. Each of the stocks needs to be carefully examined.

Keatinge replied that the tool cannot make the conclusions, experts are needed to elaborate on that.

The Chair agreed with O'Donoghue and added that since the implementation of those exemptions, technical measures had an impact on selectivity which means that the discard rate has been reduced. However, it is difficult to demonstrate the increase in selectivity.

c. Review of draft advice document

Participants reviewed the draft advice circulated in advance of the meeting.

Matilde Vallerani proposed to add a point that the exemptions review exercise is a heavy administrative burden for the Member States and to consider the possibility to extend some exemptions for a longer period of time.

Referring to the STECF check list for de minimis, Brouckaert pointed out that it is extremely difficult to collect all the data needed in a short amount of time to ensure delivery of the JR by 1 May.

John Lynch felt it was important to mention that the reasoning for a survival exemption is to avoid choking, but also to avoid the landing of a percentage of unwanted catch that would otherwise have survived. Brouckaert agreed with him and mentioned skates & rays and plaice exemptions as good examples to support these comments.

O'Donoghue commented that the advice should include a recommendation for STECF to consider socio-economic criteria in their evaluation of exemptions requests. Referring to the paragraph on the post-Brexit situation, he added that it is important to emphasize that there can't be two different regimes between EU and UK.

3. Planning and closure of the meeting

It was agreed that the updated draft should be circulated directly to the Horizontal Working Group for review. The Secretariat will contact the MS Group asking for when AC advice is expected and when the AC will receive the draft Joint Recommendation. Depending on the information provided by the MS Group, it could be necessary to implement a fast-track procedure.

4. Participants list

Members	
Emiel Brouckaert	Rederscentrale
Anais Mourtada	CNPMEM



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Sean O'Donoghue	KFO
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Secretariat	
Matilde Vallerani	
Mo Mathies	
Observers	
Michael Keatinge	Independent consultant